

REED PLACE MASTER PLAN

PUBLIC OUTREACH SUMMARY

November 26, 2024

DRAFT



In collaboration with the City of Ocala &
funded by the Environmental Planning
Agency (EPA) Brownfields Program



PURPOSE & GOALS

The design team and the City of Ocala have worked closely to secure funding from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Brownfields Program to provide assessments for potential brownfields sites throughout the City.

The importance of the ‘Reed Place’ site and its critical place within the neighborhood dictated a thorough and robust public outreach.

Goals were identified to guide the process and execute an effective and collaborative public outreach plan:

1. Introduce all stakeholders to the project, including: City of Ocala residents & Staff, and community organizations.
 2. Gather public comments, concerns, and insights from all stakeholders. Utilize various digital and physical methods of data collection.
 3. Inform all participants of the project schedule and provide information on ways to stay involved throughout the project lifecycle.

APPROACH

Outreach implementation prioritized meeting ‘people where they are.’ Working closely with the City of Ocala staff to identify spaces where the community members were already attending allowed critical face-to-face interactions and education opportunities to occur naturally and efficiently.

Located directly adjacent to the project site and acting as an important hub of activity for the community, the Mary Sue Rich Community Center was determined to be the best place to meet ‘people where they are’.

Each discussion/conversation/interaction with community members was approached as an unbiased chance to understand the needs of the community. Ensuring the participants needs and concerns were heard was the top priority, laying the foundation for future collaboration.



Mary Sue Rich Community Center at Reed Place

TOOLS UTILIZED

DIGITAL	3	Question Survey
	1	30 Min Presentation
PHYSICAL	1	Site Plan Rendering Board
	5	Visual Preference Boards
	4+	In-Person Interviews

Held at the Mary Sue Rich Community Center, the event included a comprehensive update on the current environmental conditions, followed by an in-depth presentation of the preliminary master plan, featuring precedent images that illustrated the vision and key concepts for the site.

An online survey was also provided, inviting residents to share feedback and preferences on proposed uses and revitalization strategies. Individual interviews were used to gain critical understanding of the community needs on a personal level, including Community Center users and Ruth Reed.

Multiple formats for collecting data were used to efficiently gather comments from as many participants as possible. Focusing on how each age group would likely provide feedback allowed for creative solutions to ensure an inclusive public event for the community.

PUBLIC INPUT RECEIVED

With approximately **57** community members in attendance at the event, and the participation and comments received were fantastic and provided critical insight into how to build a community asset for generations.

Many participants expressed a strong desire to give credit to those individuals who have worked tirelessly to improve and move the project forward. Finding ways to commemorate their dedication and hard work is a must and backed by the City.

Participants recognize the urban design of the proposed development will be critical to its success and its functionality. Many requested outdoor activities that can act as community gathering events, e.g. movies in the park. Places for local bands/concerts, public art murals, and ample room for open spaces with large barbecues for families and larger groups. In addition, native materials should be used for construction, such as the Ocala Limestone for walls and foundation materials.

Wider sidewalks and trails are needed to promote a healthy active lifestyle and for those without access to a car. A connected open space network with a detention pond for promoting habitat creation and community interaction, many mentioned the existing Tuscawilla Park as a good example.

Below is a summary of the comments and insights gathered:

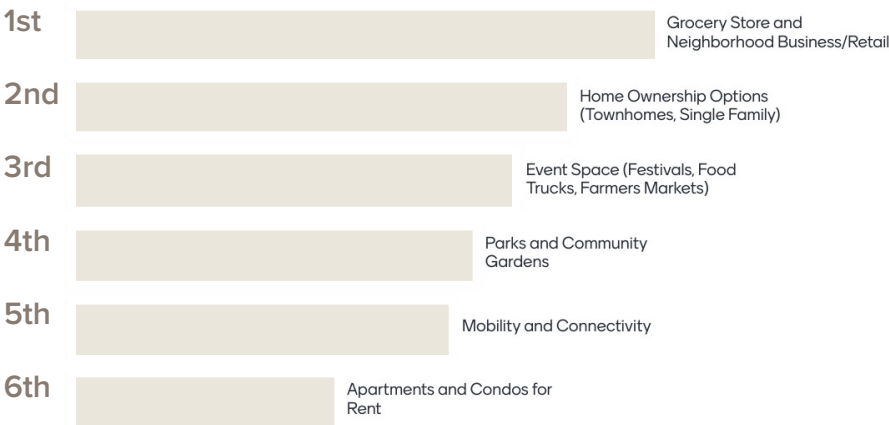


Public outreach event held on November 1, 2024 from 12-1pm at the Mary Sue Rich Community Center.

ONLINE POLL

In the first online poll question, participants were asked to rank their community needs. There were **58** responses recorded.

Based on the responses, access to food and local shops was identified as the biggest need. Followed by a strong need for homeownership options and neighborhood event spaces to gather and interact with each other. Apartments and condos were identified as the least important need of the community.



In the second online poll questions, participants were again asked to rank their community needs but this time on a more personable level. There were **50** responses recorded.

More youth activities and attainable homeownership were by far the most popular responses. Based on this data, many are concerned for the youth currently and their future opportunities for home ownership.



VISUAL PREFERENCE BOARDS

Participants were given 8 stickers (4 green and 4 red) and instructed to place green stickers on pictures/ renderings they loved and red stickers on those that they did not. There were **120*** of total stickers placed for a total of **15** participants.

Site Rendering Results		
Mixed Use/Neighborhood Commercial	14	1
Recreation Center	0	0
Open Space	2	0
High Density Residential	6	0
Medium Density Residential	10	0
Single Family Detached	4	0

Precedent Imagery Results		
Mixed Use	8	3
Main Street w/ Brick Buildings	0	3
Corner Store on Boulevard	2	0
Open Space in Mixed Use Development	1	0
Shaded Streetscape w/ Brick Buildings	5	0
Apartments - 2 or 3 Story	4	11
Modern Style Architecture	0	6
'Seaside' Style Architecture	0	2
Pool w/ Palm Trees & Hammocks	0	2
Pool w/ Fire Pit Seating Area	4	0
Architecture w/ Dark Colors	0	1
Townhomes - 2 Story	2	3
Townhomes w/ Manicured Hedges	0	3
Townhome w/ 1st and 2nd Floor Porches	1	0
Shaded Streetscape	1	0
Single Family Homes	3	1
Raised Entry Home w/ Porch	1	0
1-Story Home w/ Trees & Grass	2	1
Open Space	19	1
Seatbelt Hammock on a Lake	0	1
Green Town Square	2	0
Native Grasses on Waterfront	2	0
Circular Walking Path along Waters Edge	8	0
Shaded Seating Areas along Lake Edge	2	0
Multi-Use Path along Lake Edge	2	0
Shaded Seating Area w/ Fountain	2	0
Concrete Slides in Nature Play Area	1	0

*Not all 120 stickers are accounted for in the results, some stickers were not associated with a picture.

Density Characteristics Results		
Mixed Use	2	0
High Density	1	3
Medium Density	1	0
Single Family	3	0

Streetscapes (Right Of Way)		
59' R.O.W - Major Local Street	1	2
53' R.O.W - Minor Local Street	1	3
24' R.O.W - Alley	1	0

Participants were also give sticky notes to write comments/concerns and place on the boards where applicable.

Below is a summary of the comments:

- Use minority contractors from the local community and area.
- Clean the remainder of the present contamination so that further development can be added to Reed Place.
- Medical clinic for this community its important to remember this when replanning homes with families.
- Homes need to be affordable for those who reside here. What is attainable for one isn't attainable for all.
- Just need small functional homes with bedrooms, kitchen, bathroom, small living area.
- Make sure contaminated areas have thorough cleanup.
- Use 50 percent black contractors.
- Need more space for seniors to exercise classes on lower level.
- Current building elevators need to be more reliable
- Expand parking area.
- Emergency elevator on lower staircase.
- Make retention pond like Tuscawillow.
- The lighting for the area.
- Wetland needs help.
- The parking when we have events at MSR very bad.
- There needs to be more for young children for play.
- Walkability to Bryant and Wetland parks is needed
- Have age specific and appropriate play grounds for children.
- Incorporate more outdoor shaded areas

INTERVIEWS @ REC. CENTER

Following the public event, on Saturday November 2, 2024, impromptu interviews were conducted at the Recreation Center with community members. Many were happy to engage in a conversation about Reed Place and what is needed to help it become an asset to the community.

Below is a summary of what was heard in the interviews:

- Generational poverty is a local challenge to overcome.
- **More education mentorship programs are needed to support youth that have** broken families and little support systems at home.
- Limited job opportunities in the area.
- Limited job training opportunities in the area.
- Terracon team to explore existing programs and coordinate with John Spencer.
- Need basic financial literacy training and learn how to read the stock market.
- Even though we are planning attainable housing for the area, the community is concerned about inflation and land values continuing to increase, making housing unattainable in the future and being priced out of the neighborhood.

INTERVIEW W/ RUTH REED

Also, on Saturday November 2, 2024, Dave Harris (Terracon Project Manager) was able to sit down and have a invaluable conversation with Ruth Reed. As one of the main drivers of change within the community, and specifically with the Reed Place project, Ruth provided key insights into the needs/wants of the community, and vision of what this area could become.

Below is a summary of what was heard in the interview:

- Keep overall density down to a reasonable level.
- Dave suggested a mix of two- and three-story apartments allowing for a mix of rental options for all ages and demographics. Ruth is not a fan of three-story apartments due to the large number of families in the area.
- Interested in exploring rent-to-own options.
- Agreed 18th street Section is too narrow to have parking on both sides.
- Likes the idea of a central park with outdoor activities.
- Is interested in exploring small cottage homes with shared parking.
- Add outdoor pickleball and basketball courts to meet the demand for outdoor sports and to take pressure off of the community center..
- Make sure open space can accommodate food trucks and performance area.
- Add a laundromat in the mixed-use area.
- Provide options for a public market where local businesses and entrepreneurs can rent small start-up spaces.
- Ensure all areas of the master plan are handicap accessible.
- Very interested in a small village center where the community services are provided, and the community can come together and enjoy the services.
- Appears the mixed-use along 21st Avenue conflicts with the single family residential area across the street to the west.
- Asked, why do we have so much mixed-use on the plan?

ONLINE COMMENT PLATFORM

Participants were asked to provide any other feedback/comments that were not included in the other outreach materials. This format allowed for multiple comments per participant and provided a wide range of comments and concerns.

We need a outpatient medical center, more attainable homes, ice cream parlor, food /sandwich lunch shop, grocery stores but no narrow roads

Tree trimming in NW Ocala over by Lamb par

More access to bus routes and more variety of commercial opportunities and grocery stores.

We need a clinic in our area

- Community Health Center- Jobs for individuals living in the community - Girl center activities, not necessarily sports or arts

Community Health CenterStore that offers fresh fruits and vegetables

development of the area to include small retail and restaurants, family housing

I think expanding the public transportation infrastructure is incredibly important.

Access 2 resources presented in non-intimidating manner by person who know, understand & respect the need 2 present info & make resources available in a manner that is perceived non-intimidating.

Ability for citizens of the area near MSR comm ctr (W Ocala) to have opportunity to own housing, not rent. Knowing that owning is a road to wealth.

re-gain and re-open access to auditorium (Ed Croskey Ctr) for youth during the week for those who live south of Highway 27.

more affordable homes for single parents rather its for rent or for sale

more side walks to make the areas safe for families to walk or ride bikes to recreation centers

middle age community activites/ club house

Affordable homes, grocery store and community businesses. We need sidewalks that connect to places that is often visited.

This community needs a grocery store. We have been talking about it being a food desert for years but no real solution to the problem. Develop a real committee that can realistically make it happen.

An incubator so that potential entrepreneurs can learn, creative, plan and implement a business.

There are roadways that have paving coming up and there are more and more on the roadways. We need to plan and develop other ways to get from point A to point B.

ONLINE COMMENT PLATFORM, CONT...

Lights and police protection with sidewalks and bus service.

Neighborhood Grocery Store

Transportation moderifications

Youth Services

More libraries and youth resources

An accessible grocery store, not just a meat market or convenience store.

Affordable housing (homes , apartments, ADUs); Additional public transportation stops; neighborhood supermarkets; financial education; youth recreational opportunities; homeless shelters.

Bus service for transportation to the center.

Small and reasonably priced community grocery stores and medical facilities and better access either through increased bus routes or community based transportation options.

A place to have family or community gatherings such as banquets, weddings, and etc.

The community needs professional staff at the Mary Sue Rich Center with a vision to improve the coordination and execution of programs and activities at the center. In my opinion it starts there.

The community is in need of more activities for children, grocery stores and housing that are not sooooo expenses, and ROAD SERVICE. THE STREETS ARE TERRIBLE IN WEST OCALA COMPARED TO OTHER SECTIONS

Safety,Clean and safe water sources,Return of trees in the neighborhood to provide shade for outdoor activities,Space for youth leagues,Continued meeting spaces for non-profit, non-partisan organizati

Above minimum wage employment and teen employment

More houses and jobs

More houses are jobs

Better restaurants

This area needs more grocery options such as Dollar General Market. It has a huge park and hundreds of residential options. Maybe a retail incubator? Small office, medical, food options?

ONLINE COMMENT PLATFORM, CONT...

Community Leaders and Active Advocates

A safer environment with affordable housing and community activities for the youth. Making the community accessible and friendly for the elderly community.

Parks and recreation is very important

We need this county to invest in clean neighbors, housing and business.

Housing and businesses

Homeownership affordability and focus on community infrastructure.

better representation on city council

new city council representation

Afordable health insurance.

The community need more businesses.

once the homes are built we should extend the bus routes to accommodate the residents

a family outside activity area include a pool and outside basketball courts

The community needs affordable housing. Build homes and create programs for those who are struggling, with credit but have the financial means to purchase a home.

The community needs more transportation and community togetherness in the area. Also, opportunities to support young people. Affordable housing and funds to repair homes

Access to grocery stores; job opportunities in the community; bus transportation to mall and downtown.

The community need more businesses.

More businesses to help offset individual taxes and quality jobs for people

Affordable housing, Grocery stores, Black owned Car Wash

STAKEHOLDERS TO INVOLVE

In discussions with the Community, many names were identified as people to chat with or involve in future phases, some have volunteered themselves.

Below is a list of names with desire to stay involved:

- Ann Mathis
- Plato Mathis
- Dr. Leroy Reed
- Dr. Fordham
- Wanita Cunningham
- Sinthia Franklen
- Geneva Young
- Jesse Young
- Barbra Goodson

.....



CONCLUSION

This public outreach experience was invaluable to the design process. It became abundantly clear how important this Reed Place project is to the surrounding community. The history of the site and the process to clean and revitalize it is not something to be taken lightly. Providing a complete and thorough revitalization plan, centered on the community’s needs, will set the vision and provide a foundation for all decisions to build upon.

The amount of public interest and feedback cannot be understated. Success for this public outreach plan depended on providing multiple ways for community members to provide comments and meeting people ‘where they are’. This allowed for impromptu discussion, interviews and interactions that would not otherwise have happened. Specifically, the interview with Ruth Reed was invaluable.

Overall there was **57** participants at the event held at the Mary Sue Rich Community Center, approximately **58** participants in the online survey, **15** participants with the visual preference boards, and **4+** interviews and discussions.

The feedback we heard prompted questions and thoughts to be discussed with the City and applicable stakeholders. Many of these items have been discussed in various forms already, but are being shown here to provide a record for future conversations:

- ADUs are a feasible strategy for creating affordable rental and equity for home ownership. Currently the ADU needs to be attached to the primary residence. This can be revisited by the City when they explore their code update.
- There is not a good mix of jobs in the area. Can we create conditions through our master planning strategy to encourage development of mixed use that provides more jobs?
- Does the City, County, or State have any first-time home buyer incentives or grants that can pay for the down payment and closing costs?
- Angelica with Terracon will continue to explore additional clean up grants for 2026.
- Currently, we recommend removing the contaminated soil all together so there are no deed restrictions on the property.
- If we monitor the existing ground water for another year, we assume any ground water restrictions can be removed from the property as well.
- If desired Terracon can provide a proposal to provide a market demand study. This would provide the following additional information to help with revitalization strategies:
 - Product typology absorption rate estimate.
 - Updated demographics.
 - Segmentation plan illustrating how many of each type of product could be constructed along with the estimated price range.
 - Does the City have a list of private/public partners they can explore development strategies with?
 - Based on discussions with the community and Ruth Reed, it appears we have a lot of mixed use. Is this sustainable and can we explore a more appropriately designed village core for the mixed use associated with a clinic, local shops, a small, activated plaza programmed and managed by the City parks department? (Millcreek Common Example)

APPENDIX

Neighborhood Citizens of Northwest Ocala

P. O. Box 6548 Ocala, FL 34478
 1604 NW 18th CT Ocala, FL 34475
 Ocala, FL 34478

ruthreed2006@icloud.com
 352-351-0688 H 352-208-2233 C

MEMBERSHIP ROSTER-2022-2024

Names	Officers	Street	City/State	Phone Numbers	Emails
Ruth E. Reed	Pres. Ceo.	1604 NW 18th Ct	Ocala, FL 34475	352-208-2233	<u>ruthreed2006@icloud.com</u>
Sandy Craig	Memb.	2224 NW 24th Rd	Ocala, FL 34475	352-875-6924	<u>sandy.craig30@gmail.com</u>
Ralph/Dorothy Daniels	Memb.	1805 NW 26th Ave.	Ocala, FL 34475	352-732-7802	
Cynthia Franklin	Treasure	2228 NW 18th St.	Ocala, FL 34475	352-208-9073	
Marie Dixon Jones*	Reg. Agent	P. O. Box 506	Ocala, FL 34475	352-875-8504	
Jessie Lewis	Memb.	1810 NW 26th Ave.	Ocala, FL 34475	352-723-2625	
Donald Nelson	Director	140 NE 49th Street	Ocala, FL 34479	352-804-9537	
Shirley Nelson	Director	140 NE 49th Street	Ocala, FL 34479	352-804-9537	<u>candts480@cox.net</u>
Joe Sears	Memb.	1813 NW 26th Ave.	Ocala, FL 34475	352-622-7319	
Margaret Spivey	Memb.	1615 NW 20th Ct	Ocala, FL 34475	352-207-8422	
Sarah Smith	Memb.	2413 NW 20th St.	Ocala, FL 34475	352-622-6243	
May Stafford	Director	2514 18th St.	Ocala, FL 34475	352-629-4709	<u>ocalmay@embarqmail.com</u>

Dorothy Kemp	Memb.	1409 NW 20th Ct	Ocala, FL 34475	352-629-6811	Deceased
Regina Berry					
Gail Dukes	Memb.				
Mary Brooks	Memb.				
Gloria Robson			Ocala, FL 34475	352-895-4057	
Jean Kinsler	Memb.	2155 NW 27th Ave.	Ocala, FL 34475	352-497-4022	
Marion & Liz Lennon	Memb.	5907 NW 27th PL	Ocala, FL 34475	352-351-3590	
Annie & Plato Mathis	Memb.	2100 21St. Ave.	Ocala, FL 34475	352-732-7918	Deceased
Ira Bethea,Sr.	Non	2757 NW 27th Ave.	352-208-0819	352-208-0819	
Amos Thompson	Memb.	2401 NW 24th Rd.	Ocala, FL 34475	352-629-2055	
Geneva Young	Asst. Treas.	1806 NW 26th Ave.	Ocala, FL 34475	352-732-7715	
Toni Grinmsley	Memb.	2220 NW 14th	Ocala, FL 34475	352-361-7891	
Juanita Cunningham Memb. 1814 NW 14th St. Ocala, FL 34475 352-351-0233					aged out
Edmund Fordham Memb. 1711 NW 18th Ave. Ocala, FL 34475 352-629-9882					Deceased
William James Memb. 7576 NW HWY 44 Ocala, FL 34475 352-629-2642					Deceased
Zenobia/Roland Smith Memb. 1409 NW 19th Ave Ocala, FL 34475 352-829-5163					Roland Deceased Zenobia aged out
Dr. Leroy C. Reed, Sr.					Deceased

<i>Florence & husband Drummer</i>	<i>F-Deceased H-Aged out</i>
<i>Spener White & Minnie White</i>	<i>S- Deceased M-Aged out</i>

Rtrh E. Reed, President